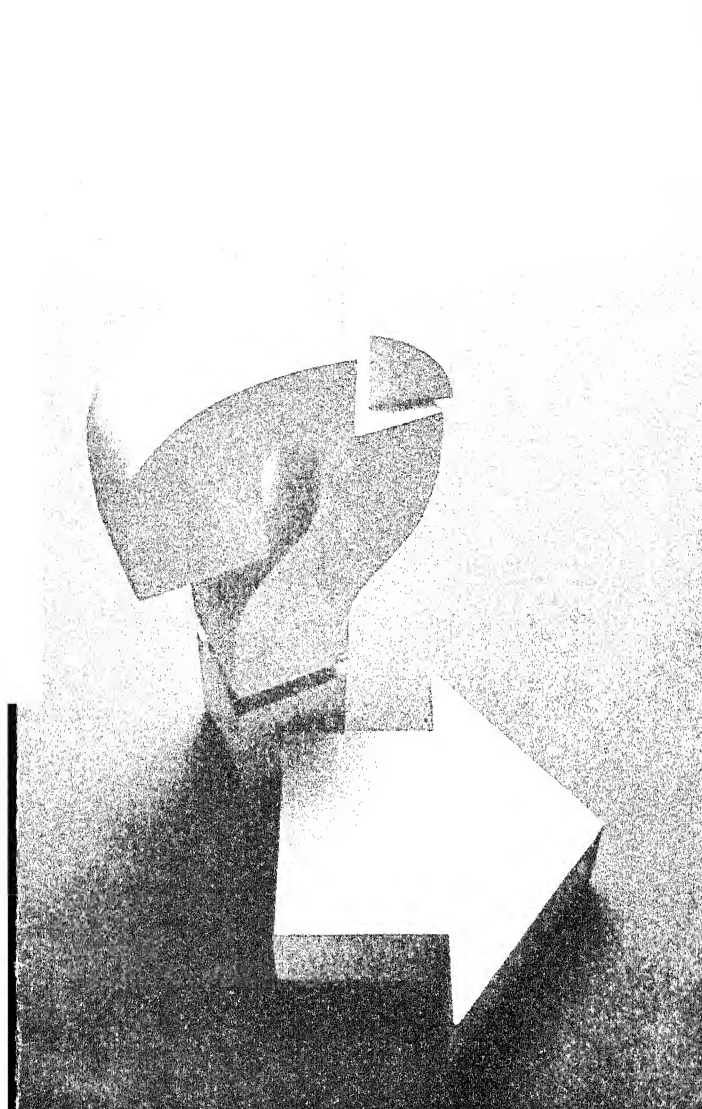


YOUR DISABILITY CLAIM

JANUARY 1987 EDITION



Your disability claim

This leaflet explains:

- How your claim for disability benefits will be handled;
- Your responsibility to help furnish any additional information or evidence that may be required; and
- How you will be notified of the decision made on your claim.

Role of the Social Security office

The Social Security office takes your claim and makes sure you meet all basic requirements. It does not decide if you are disabled. The way the claim is handled at this stage depends on whether you applied for Social Security or supplemental security income (SSI) checks:

- *Social Security benefits*—If you are a disabled worker, your earnings record will be reviewed to see if you worked long enough and recently enough under Social Security to be insured. If you applied as a worker's disabled dependent or survivor, a review will be made to see if he or she worked long enough to be insured.

If medical evidence shows that your condition meets or equals the severity of a similar condition described in Social Security's *Listing of Impairments*, you are presumed to be disabled. (You can look at these listings in any Social Security office.)

If your condition is not included in the *Listing of Impairments*, yet is severe, a finding of disability may still be possible. The DDS team will study how your impairment limits your activities and what remaining abilities you have. It will determine whether you are able to do either your regular type of job or some other kind of substantial gainful work. Your age, education, and previous work experience will be considered in deciding this.

(NOTE—If you are a widow or widower applying for disability checks, a decision is based only on medical facts. Your age, education, and work experience are not considered.)

Obtaining medical reports

The Disability Determination Services people will get the medical reports you authorized them to request. If they have difficulty getting the reports, you may be asked to help them. If any report is not received, the decision on your claim may have to be based on available information.

On the medical report forms, your doctors or other sources are asked for a medical history of your condition: What is wrong with you and when it began; how the condition limits activities; what medical tests have shown; and what treatment has been provided. They are not asked to decide whether or not you are disabled.

It is likely that a decision on whether you are disabled can be based on medical reports from sources you listed. But if more medical information is needed, you may be referred to a physician or to a clinic or other facility for a special examination or test. The Government will pay for this additional evidence and certain travel costs connected with it.

Vocational rehabilitation

Whether or not your disability claim is approved, you will be considered for possible services by your State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency to help you get back to work. Services could include counseling and guidance, medical or surgical help, and job training and placement. If you are offered services and refuse them without good cause, monthly benefits cannot be paid.

If you have questions

If you have any questions or want more information about your claim, contact your Social Security office. The people there will be glad to help you.